



THE  
CONNOISSEUR.

By Mr. T O W N,

CRITIC and CENSOR-GENERAL.

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*Stultus et improbus hic amor est, dignusque notari.*

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T a certain coffee-house near the *Temple* the bar is kept by a pretty coquet, a piece of furniture almost as necessary for a coffee-room in that situation as the news papers.

This lady, you may be sure, has many admirers, who are now and then glad of an opportunity to relieve themselves from the severe study of the law by a soft conversation with this fair one, and repeating on the occasion all the tender things they can remember from plays, or whatever else *Orgeat* or *Capilaire* can inspire. Among the many pretenders to her favour there is one faithful swain, who has long entertained a serious passion for her. This tender-hearted gentleman, who is grown so lean with living upon love, that one would imagine “ the blasts of *January*

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" would blow him through and through," comes every evening, and sits whole hours by the bar, gazing at his mistress, and taking in large draughts of love and Hyson tea. Never was swain in such cruel circumstances. He is forced to bear with patience all the haughty insolence of this goddess of bread and butter ; who, as she knows him in her power, keeps him at a distance, though she behaves with the pertest familiarity to the other coxcombs, who are continually buzzing about her. At eleven he sneaks off pale and discontented ; but cannot forbear coming again the next evening, though he knows how vilely he shall be used by his mistress, and that he is laughed at even by the waiters.

IF all true lovers were obliged, like this unhappy gentleman, to carry on their courtships in public, we should be witness to many scenes equally ridiculous. Their awkward desire of pleasing influences every trivial gesture, and when once love has got possession of a man's heart, it shews itself down to the tips of his fingers. The conversation of a languishing *inamorato* is made up chiefly of dumb signs, such as sighs, ogle, or glances : but if he offers to break his passion to his mistress, there is such a stammering, faltering and half-wording the matter, that the language of love, so much talked of by poets, is in truth no language at all. Whoever should break in upon a gentleman and lady, while so critical a conversation is going forward, would not forbear laughing at such an extraordinary *tête à tête*, and would perhaps cry out with *Ranger*, that " nothing looks so silly " as a pair of your true lovers."

SINCE true and sincere love is sure to make it's votaries thus ridiculous, we cannot sufficiently commend our present people of quality, who have made such laudable attempts to deliver themselves and posterity from its bondage. In a fashionable

fashionable wedding the man or woman are neither of them considered as reasonable creatures, who come together in order to "comfort, love, cherish, honour or obey," according to their respective duties, but are regarded merely as instruments of joining one estate to another. Acre marries acre; and to increase and multiply their fortunes is in genteel matches the chief consideration of man and wife. The courtship is carried on by the council of each party, and they pay their addresses by billet-deux upon parchment. The great convenience of expelling love from matrimony is very evident: Married persons of quality are never troubled with each others company abroad, or fatigued with dull matrimonial discourses at home: My lord keeps his girl, my lady has her gallant; and they both enjoy all the fashionable privileges of wedlock without the inconveniences. This would never be the case, if there was the least spark of love subsisting between them, but they must be reduced to the same situation with those wretches, who (as they have nothing to settle on each other but themselves) are obliged to make up the deficiencies of fortune by affection. But while these miserable, fond, doating, unfashionable couples are obliged to content themselves with love and a cottage, people of quality enjoy the comforts of indifference and a coach and fix,

THE late Marriage Act is excellently adapted to promote this prudential proceeding with respect to wedlock. It will in time inevitably abolish the old system of founding matrimony on affection: and marrying for love will be given up for the sake of marrying according to Act of Parliament. There is now no danger of an handsome worthy young fellow of small fortune running away with an heiress; for it is not sufficient to insinuate himself into  
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the lady's favour by a voluble tongue and a good person, unless he can also subdue the considerate parents or guardians by the merits of his rent-roll. As this Act promotes the method of disposing of children by way of bargain and sale, it consequently puts an end to that ridiculous courtship, arising from simple love. In order therefore to confirm (as far as possible) the happy consequences of this act, I have been long endeavouring to hit on some expedient, by which all the circumstances preparatory to wedlock may be carried on in a proper manner. A *Smithfield* bargain being so common in metaphor, I had once some thoughts of proposing to realize it, and had almost completed a plan, by which all the young persons (like servant girls at a statute-fair in the country) were to be brought to market, and disposed of in one part of *Smithfield*, while the sheep and horses were on sale in another.

IN the midst of these serious considerations I received a scheme of this nature from my good friend Mr. KEITH, whose chapel the late Marriage Act has rendered useless on its original principles. This reverend gentleman, seeing that all husbands and wives are henceforward to be put up to sale, proposes shortly to open his chapel on a more new and fashionable plan. As the ingenious Messieurs *Henson* and *Bever* have lately opened in different quarters of the town Repositories for all horses to be sold by auction; Mr. KEITH intends setting up a Repository for all young males and females to be disposed of in marriage. From these studs (as the Doctor himself expresses it) a lady of beauty may be coupled to a man of fortune, and an old gentleman, who has a colt's tooth remaining, may match himself with a tight young filly.

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The Doctor makes no doubt but his Chapel will turn out even more to his advantage on this new plan than on it's first institution, provided he can secure his scheme to himself, and reap the benefits of it without interlopers from the *Fleet*. To prevent his design being pirated, he intends petitioning the Parliament, that as he has been so great a sufferer by the Marriage Act, the sole right of opening a Repository of this sort may be vested in him, and that his place of residence in May Fair may still continue the grand mart for marriages. Of the first day of sale proper notice will be given in the public papers, and in the mean time I am desir'd to communicate the following specimen to my readers.

*Catalogue of Males and Females to be disposed of in Marriage to the Best Bidder, at Mr. KEITH's Repository in May Fair.*

**A** LADY of Quality, very high blood, related by the mother's side to a peer of *France*, her Dam came from one of the oldest families in *Wales*, and her great great Grandfire was brought over with *William* the Conqueror. Fit to go in a coach and six, and proper for any rich tradesman, who is desirous to mend the Breed. Her lowest price to prevent trouble, is 500*l.* per ann. pinmoney, and a proportionable jointure.

A young lady of 100,000 *l.* fortune—to be bid for by none under the degree of peers, or a commoner of at least treble the income.

A Homely Thing who can read, write, cast accounts, and make an excellent pudding.—This lot to be bid for by none but country parsons.

Three Maiden Ladies—Aged—to be bid for by none but stout young fellows of six foot, sound wind and limb, and without blemish.

Four Widows, young and rich—to be bid for by none but Things of mettle and high blood—

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The Daughter of a Country 'Squire—the father of this Lady came to town to sell a yoke of oxen at *Smithfield*, and a load of hay in the *Hay-Market*. Whoever buys them shall have the lady into the bargain.

A Methodist Lady, Relict of a Knight deceased within this twelvemonth—would be a good bargain to any handsome young gentleman, who would comfort her in the Spirit.

A very pretty Young Woman, but a good deal in debt—would be glad to marry a Member of Parliament or a Jew.

A handsome Housekeeper, just come out of the country, would do for any private gentleman. She has been used to go in an one horse chair, and is fit for a citizen's service on a Sunday.

A tall *Irishman*, warranted sound, lately in possession of a Lady Dowager. The reason of his being sold is that the owner, who is married, has no further use for him.

A Blood of the first rate, very wild, and has run loose all his life, but is now *broke*, and will prove very tractable.

A Hackney Writer, troubled with the farcy, broken-winded, and very poor—would be glad to be released from his present master, a bookseller, and bear the less grievous yoke of matrimony. Whoever will take him into feeding, shall have his *pegasus* into the bargain.

A Young Ward, now in training at *Eton-school*.—The guardian is willing to part with him to any lady for a round sum of money. If not sold, he will be sent into the country, and matched with his guardian's daughter.

Five Templars—all Irish—No one to bid for these lots of less than 10,000*l.* fortune.

Wanted—four dozen of Young Fellows, and one dozen of Young Women willing to marry to advantage—to go to *Nova Scotia*.

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